DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 283 622 PS 016 711

AUTHOR Bouchard, Camil
TITLE Schooling, Values, Objective Life Conditions and Social Support: Their Predictive Power in the Reported Use of Coercive Behaviors by Mothers of 6- to 8-Year Old Children.
SPONS AGENCY Canadian Social Science and Humanities Research Council, Ottawa (Ontario).; Quebec Univ., Montreal.
PUB DATE Apr 87
NOTE 22p.; Paper presented at the Biennial Meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development (Baltimore, MD, April 23-26, 1987).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Academic Achievement; *Authoritarianism; Children; *Family Environment; Family Size; *Mothers; One Parent Family; *Parent Child Relationship; Values
IDENTIFIERS *Control (Social Behavior)

ABSTRACT

This study was undertaken to identify the relative contribution of personal and environmental variables to the reported frequency of use of coercive control behaviors in a nonclinical sample of mothers. Seventy mothers of 6- to 8-year-old children participated; half were from single-parent families. Results of analysis of variance indicate that schooling level and number of children significantly affect the use of authoritarian maternal conduct. Multiple regression analysis reveals that values of conformity held by mothers, high levels of home density, low occupational status, and scarcity of social support resources (all included in Factor 3) account for 30% of the variance in coercion scores. Although educational level is associated with only 9% of the variance, it strongly influences the relationship between Factor 3 and use of coercive behaviors. This is true for mothers in both single- and two-parent families. Single mothers are more critical in the appraisal of their physical and social environments and report more potentially stressful life events. On the other hand, a social network is identified with help in the emotional and instrumental areas. (Author/BG)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED283622

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

Schooling, values, objective life conditions and social support: their predictive power in the reported use of coercive behaviors by mothers of 6 to 8 year old children.

Camil Bouchard,
Department of Psychology,
Université du Québec à Montréal.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Camil Bouchard

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

PS 016711

This paper was presented as part of a poster at the Biennial Convention of the Society for Research in Child Development, Baltimore April 1987.

The author wishes to gratefully thank Daniel Fecteau for his major contribution to this research project and Sandra Rafman for her generous revision of the manuscript. He also wants to thank mothers who participated in this study and graduate students who worked on the project: Ginette Neault, Nicole Pilon and Réjean Tessier. He also acknowledges the financial support of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and of the Université du Québec à Montréal. Address reprint request and correspondance to Camil Bouchard, Laboratoire de recherche en écologie humaine et sociale, Université du Québec à Montréal, C.P. 8888, Succursale a, Montréal, Canada, H3C 3P8.

(Submitted to Child Development, June 1987)

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Abstract

This study was undertaken to identify the relative contribution of personal and environmental variables to the reported frequency of use of coercive control behaviors in a non-clinical sample of mothers. Seventy (70) mothers of 6 to 8 years old children participated; half were from single parent families. Mothers' schooling level and number of children significantly affect the use of authoritarian maternal conducts. There is no difference between single and two parent family mothers in the use of coercive conducts with their children. Multiple regression analysis reveals that values of conformity held by mothers, high levels of home density, low occupational status and scarcity of social support ressources (Factor 3) account for 30% of the variance in coercion scores. Educational level, although associated with only 9% of the variance, strongly influences the relationship between this factor and the use of coercive behaviors. This is true for both single and two-parent family mothers. Single mothers are more critical in the appraisal of their physical and social environment and identify more potentially stressful life events than mothers of two-parent families. On the other hand, they report a higher ratio of their social network being involved in helping them with emotional and instrumental issues.

Schooling, values, objective life conditions and social support: their predictive power in the reported use of coercive behaviors by mothers of 6 to 8 year old children.

Parents resort to a host of efficient to desperate strategies to control the behaviors of their children. Grusec & Kuczynski (1980) showed that mothers use multiple methods depending on the context in which they have to intervene. The sociological as well as the psychological research work in this domain generaly divide the repertoire of parents' control behaviors into three classes (Baumrind, 1967; Hoffman, 1970; Rollins & Thomas, 1979). The three most prevalent categories found and documented in the literature are induction, coercion and withdrawal of love. Induction comprises those attempts by the parent to control the child conduct by using firm but warm and informational strategies. In this instance, the parent leaves some room for the child to express his/her own point of view, and gives explanations about his/her own behavior. Coercive behaviors cover those efforts by the parent to control the child behaviors in ressorting to rigid or punitive strategies. The child has to comply to the parents' decisions or orders and does not have much say in the process. Love withdrawal refers to parents' behaviors who express their dissapproval by ignoring or rejecting the child until he/she complies with parental requirements (Rollins & Thomas, 1979). The present work deals exlusively with frequency of use of coercive strategies as they are reported by mothers.

It is often proposed that efficient control of the behaviors of a child is a matter of knowing and/or using the appropriate strategies. Socioeconomic status has generally been negatively associated with authoritarian disciplinary strategies (Gecas, 1979). For example, parental schooling is said to be related, at least in some of the categories, to less authoritarian teaching and disciplinary strategies (Loose, 1983). However, there are numerous indications to the effect that other personal and environmental factors play an important role in the utilisation of coercive behaviors by the parents. Child abuse research attests to the importance of multilevel factors in predicting its occurrence; the characteristics of the child and of the functioning of the family, the employment status of the father (Gelles & Strauss,1977), the regional economical change (Steinberg, Catalano & Dooley, 1981), the number of children in the family, the structure of the family (Gelles & Strauss, 1977), the isolation of the family from the rest of the community, the deterioration of their physical, economical and social environment (Garbarino & Crouter, 1978; Garbarino & Sherman, 1980) and the values shared by the members of a society regarding the role of parents and the development of children

(Korbin,1980) represent a partial list of the numerous elements linked to child maltreatment.

A series of studies by Wahler and his colleagues (Dumas, in press; Wahler, 1980; Wahler & Dumas, 1983;) reveal that socioeconomic disadvantage and insularity of mothers are related both to the degre of success in altering their aversive responding toward their aggressive child and in maintaining their treatment gains. As the socioeconomic disadvantage measure is a composite of income, education, presence or absence of father, number of children and aree of residence (Dumas, in press), these results comfirm those obtained at the aggragate level in a somewhat more dramatic situation (child abuse). These authors argue that the inability of many disadvantaged mothers to use other types of behaviors may be due to the fact that they have to face aversive contextual stimuli "such as economic pressures and conflicts with other adults" (Dumas, in press, p.15). It is also possible that these disadvantaged mothers more strongly agree with values such as conformity and obediance of the child as it is often the case in their work and social environment (Kohn, 1963,1977; Lambert, Hamers & Frasure-Smith, 1979) and thus rely on harsher and more demanding disciplinary techniques.

The present work aims at identifying the relative contribution of personal and environmental variables to the reported frequency of use of coercive behavior in a non-clinical sample of mothers. Since single-parent family mothers have been reported to be more under stress than mothers of intact family and to receive less support from their social environment (Weinraub & Wolf, 1983) those two subgroups are compared.

Method

Subjects Seventy (70) mothers participated in the study. They had been recruited via a letter distributed to mothers' children of first, second and third grades in their classroom. Half of the recruited mothers were from single parent families. They were younger (31.2 vs 35 years old), had less children (1.7 vs 2.4) and declared a lower family income (9,170$ vs 28,350$) than mothers of intact families. Education levels were equal (Table 1).

Procedures Mothers who accepted to participate in the study were contacted by phone. They were told that the main objective of the study was to assess the various aspects of their life as parents. A female interviewer met the mother at her home. The interview was approximately 1.5 hours long and the forms were filled out by the mother with the help of the interviewer. If she had more than one child, the mother was invited to choose a (target) child to whom she refered troughout the interview.

Measures

Parental Control Behaviors (PCB) A questionaire (PCB) was developed to assess the frequency of utilization of coercive and inductive control behaviors as reported by the parents. Previously, a separate sample of twenty mothers of 6 to 8 years old children had been asked to describe usual situations where they had to control the behaviors of their children. Eight vignettes were constructed retaining the most familiar situations. For each of these situations, six possible parental reactions were presented to the respondant. Three of these reactions were coercive; they included classes of behaviors such as threatening, humiliating, blaming, commanding. Three others were inductive: they comprised behaviors such as giving or asking for explanations, asking the child about his/her point of view, suggesting alternative behaviors to the child. The inclusion of both categories of control behaviors helped to reduce social desirability , and took into account the very large array of parental strategies used by most parents in their attempts to control their children behaviors. The mothers had to estimate their own frequency of use of each of these possible strategies in similar day life situations on a scale ranging from 1 (*very rarely*) to 5 (*very often*). Two scores were computed in adding these estimates separately for coercive and inductive conducts.

Test of validity (N=185) and of reliability (N=56) were performed with mothers and fathers (Tessier, Pilon & Fecteau, 1985). Test-retest reliability scores were high for both coercive and inductive measurements (.80; .68). Cronback's alpha was higher for coercive than for inductive scores (.87 vs .80); however, Tukey non-additivity coefficient was significant for inductive behaviors scores. Modest but reliable convergent validity was obtained between coercive scores and mothers' behavior when observed at home interacting with their child; this

was not the case for inductive scores (Neault, 1984). It was then decided to retain coercive scores only for further analyses. The lowest possible individual score was 24, the highest was 120.

Parental characteristics. Questions were asked to evaluate mothers *values* regarding the education of their child in the area of conformity, autonomy and social competence of the child. Mothers were also invited to assess their *own competence* as parents as well as their degree of *satisfaction* in assuming this role. Other questions dealt with the *level of difficulty* encountered in raising the target child, and with their *occupational* and *financial* situations. In addition, the *Life Events Questionaire* (Holmes and Rahe, 1967) was used to assess the importance of stress related issues in the previous year as revealed by the weighted scores.

The family physical and social environment. A series of questions adressed the evaluation by the mother of the *neighborhood* in terms of its social and physical habitability. Various domains were covered: child's group of friends, degree of security for the child, degree of residential stability, friendliness of neighboors, availability and quality of playgrounds, general appreciation of the physical surroundings. Other questions related more specifically to the *apartment* or *house* density of occupation and overall perceived *adequacy*.

Personal social support and ressources. Mothers were asked to identify those in their social environment who were helpful in the areas of emotional/affectional and of pratical/instrumental support. Scores of *network size,* of *ratio* of persons offering each type of help, of general *satisfaction* towards received support, of *frequency* of contacts with ressources were computed. Additional information was collected in relation to *number of organisations or community groups* attended by mothers.

Help received in educating or caring for the child. Specific aspects of partnership between the mothers and other adults intervening in the education and care of the child were examined. Thus *satisfaction* with professionals, school personal and other adults in the informal network of the child was measured.

Data reduction.

In view of the very large numbers of variables (33) the various scores which had been derived from the previous dimensions were submitted to a factorial analysis (BMDP, Varimax) (Table 2). Six factors emerged: 1) Positive perception of the environment (in terms of the neighborhood physical appearance and security and as a place to raise children, of friends of the child, of children playgrounds, of importance of the appartment in caring for the children), 2) Satisfaction with overall help received (from school professionals and neighbors, from neighbors and from the entire social network), 3) Values of conformity and poor conditions of life (in terms of norms and values in educating the child, of occupational status, of objective density of the appartment or house, of emotional insularity), 4) Small and satisfying social network (with high ratio of members providing instrumental support, and satisfaction with enacted emotional and instrumental support), 5) Attendence to community groups (in terms of numbers and frequency of contact with groups), and 6) Contacts with members of the social network (as reflected by the frequency and by appreciation of the quality of the supervision of the child).

Results

PCB. The mean score on the coercitive dimension of the PCB scale was 62,14 (SD: 14.22) for the whole sample. Single parent family mothers obtained a mean score slightly lower (non significant) than the one of intact families mothers (59.94 vs 64.35) . There was no significant difference between scores of mothers of target boys or girls (64.20 vs 60.19). Neither was there a significant difference between families with an income of less than $20,000. and over (62.91 vs 60.66). Families with two children or more (N=47) scored higher than families with one child (N=23) (64.7 vs 56.9; t=-2.21, df 68, p<.03). Mothers with less than high school education also obtained higher coercive scores than the others (69.4 vs 53.5; t= 5.63, d

68, p<.0001).

Ecological variables. Student T tests were performed comparing one and two parent families on each of the 33 personal and environmental variables before data reduction (Table 3). Nine significant differences emerged out of which four (4) related to the quality of the surroundings and of the social environment. Single parent family mothers were less satisfied with the friends with whom their child associated, with neighboors, with the general outlook of the surroundings, and declared a lower residential stability. In addition, they showed a much higher level of stress during the previous year, and a greater dissatisfaction with their financial situation. They also were less positive toward the quality of school influence on their child. In counterpart, the ratio of persons in their social network assisting them in the emotional and instrumental areas was higher.

Ecological variables and PCB. A multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine the relative contribution of each of the six personal and environmental factorial scores and of two demographical factors already identified as significant factors (Educational level, Number of children) to the observed variance in the distribution of coercive parental control behaviors scores. The analysis was first conducted with the scores of all mothers (N=70) (Table 4). Of the 44.6% of the overall explained variance, Factor 3 (Values of conformity and poor life conditions) accounted for 29.9%, education for 8.9%. Other personal and environmental factorial scores contributed for very little. The correlation matrix for one and two parent families indicated that Factor 3 was indeed positively associated with coercive scores for both groups (r= .55 vs .51) (Table 5). A positive correlation was found between Factor 4 (Small and satisfying social network) and coercive scores (r=.42) among two parent families only. High negative correlations were also found for both groups between schooling level and reports of coercive behaviors by mothers (r= -.57 vs -.54). A positive correlation was found between the number of children and coercitives scores for mothers of one parent families only (r=.42).

Additional regression analyses were performed for the two groups separately. The six personal and environmental factorial scores were the only ones entered in the regressions in

view of the small N in each group (35). For one parent families, Factor 3 (r^2=.31) remained the most important predictor among the ecological variables. It is followed by Factor 6 (Contacts of mothers with the social network) (r^2= .06). With two parent family mothers Factor 3 (r^2=.26) and Factor 4 (r^2=. 09) were the main predictors of coercive behaviors.

Finally a correlation matrix between the six factorial scores and the coercive behavior scores was created in dividing the entire sample in three educational subgroups (<9 years, >9 years and <14 years and >15 years). There is a very high correlation between Factor 3 and coercive behavior scores (r: .76) in the less educated subgroup, a much lower one with the middle of the range group (r: .38) and a very small correlation within the group with the highest educational record (r: .05). Also worth noticing is the shift in correlation between Factor 5 (Attendance to community groups) and coercive scores; a negative correlation (r:-.35) is found with the less educated subgroup whereas a positive correlation appears with the most educated subgroup (r:.42).

Discussion

Parental coercive behavior scores

There is no difference in the frequency of use of coercive strategies by single parent family mothers and by two parent family mothers. This is consistant with the results reported by Weinraub and Wolf (1983); observation by these researchers of mother-child interaction in a structured laboratory interview did not lead to any substantiated difference between those two groups of mothers on dimensions of maternal control and maternal nurturance. Utilization of coercive strategies seems to be more strongly related to other personal/ environmental variables.

Mothers with less than high school education reported using coercive strategies more often than mothers with longer schooling. This result underlines quite clearly the importance of education and is also convergent with several findings (reported in Gecas, 1983). Longer attendence to school would give mothers access to more flexible and specialized modes of communication with their children (Leese, 1983).

Family structure and environmental variables

As previously mentioned, and in accordance with Weinraub and Wolf (1983) results, the single family mothers reported a much higher degree of stress related events; however, one should note that there is no indication about the valence of these events. In fact, there are some indications (Bouchard & Chouinard, in preparation) that single family mothers may report more positive than negative events in the year following their separation; these events pertain to changes in their life orientation, to solving relational problems, to modification in their relationship with the children, to new orientations at work, and so forth. They are explicitely rated as positive by the mothers and their incidence is related to more support from their social environment. Positive or negative events may well have a differential effect on mothers' repertoire of disciplinary strategies and their concommitant appearance in our data may well mask a possible relation between stress and coercive scores.

Other differences between the two groups of mothers reveal that single mothers are more resentful of certain economic and social contexts than intact family mothers. In addition to a deteriorated financial situation, mothers underline their worries about several dimensions as, for example, the inappropriateness of school, of groups of friends and of the neighborhood for their child. This is coupled with a low residential stability, and may reflect the obligation for single mothers to move to a less costly neighborhood where they do not seem to find an appropriate social environment for themselves as well (higher dissatisfaction with neighboors). Contrary to Weinraub and Wolf (1983) this does not translate into a smaller network size. They declare an equivalent number of helping persons; however, the percentage of members enacting emotional or instrumental support is higher than with two parent family mothers. This could be due to the multiplexity of roles played by the partner in this latter group and to a more pressing need of help expressed or required by single mothers.

Coercive behaviors and personal/environmental variables

Applied to the entire sample, the regression analysis displayed the predictive power of social class attributes in the reported utilization of mothers' authoritarian control techniques. Inspection of Factor 3 reveals that values of obedience and conformity form the main component

of this cluster. Kohn (1963, 1977) has claimed that these values are adopted by lower-class parents as they reflect those which are functional or adaptative in their own occupational structures. Our results confirm the proposed link between the presence of conformity values and the use of coercive parental control strategies. Furthermore the positive contribution of apartment density and the negative contribution of occupational status (in terms of the numbers of weekly hours worked) to this cluster confirm the proposed link between lower-class living conditions and authoritarian disciplinary techniques. Finally, as many times stated by Wahler and his coworkers (1980, 1983), the negative contribution of the social network portion delivering emotional support to the factor corroborates the role played by mothers's isolation or insularity in the maintenance of aversive relationship with their children.

Schooling explains a modest part of the variance in the distribution of coercive scores. Although this contribution may appear low in view of a high negative correlation between this variable and authoritarian scores ($r: -.55$), it should be noted that there is a high correlation between schooling and Factor 3 ($r:-.39$, $p<.001$). Part of the variance attribuable to schooling is then already taken into account by Factor 3. The importance of schooling appears more clearly when mothers are distributed in three subgroups according to their school attainment year. Very high in the case of mothers with less than 9 years of schooling, the correlation between Factor 3 and coercive scores completely disappears when mothers declare more than 14 years of education. This interaction between schooling and personal (values) and living conditions may be due to a higher homogeneity in the distribution of Factor 3 scores in the more educated subgroups which would not permit the emergence of a strong correlation. It could also mean that mothers with lower education depend more heevily on environmental conditions from which they cannot easily escape; education may permit to buy services and may also give access to more social capital i.e., to appropriate helping social ressources at least in terms of instrumental/emotional support. Campbell and Cochran (1983) reported larger social networks for married mothers of higher educational levels; these networks provided more "emotional and instrumental assistance" (p.6).

Depending on the educational level, the direction of the correlation between Factor 5

(Attendence to community groups) and coercive scores changes. For mothers with little schooling, the correlation is negative; it is reversed for mothers with over 15 years of schooling. The nature of these community groups, the contexts in which mothers attend to them and the mothers' motivation in frequenting these organisations are missing; these elements now appear necessary for a better understanding of the data.

Also worth noticing is the positive correlation between Factor 4 (Small and satisfying network) and coercive scores with intact family mothers only. This counterintuitive result poses problem. A detailed description of this factor leads to the following speculations: 1) the factorial score is a mixed measure of social support (perceived support, ennacted support and social embednedness; Barerra, 1986) and as such does not constitute a solid ground for interpretation as it confuses issues of network structure and of phenomenological appraisal of the obtained support; 2) the factorial score may indicate that those mothers relying on a small network may well declare themselves satisfied with what they get, but may also be entrapped in a feedback system where they almost exclusively find normative support for using coercive behaviors in their immediate environment which participates in the same cultural script; 3) the high ratio of instrumental support associated with this factor may be indicative of the importance of the difficulties or stress encountered by the mothers. Crockenberg, and Riley and Eckenrode (in Bronfenbrenner, 1986) report results of the same kind when mothers find themselves in "reduced socioeconomic status", "under highly stressful conditions", when they get low scores on locus of control measures or when their own social support network is under stress. Furthermore, Campbell and Cochran (1983) have proposed that a larger kin network is associated with a more positive perception of their child with working educated mothers. Such interactions should certainly be documented in the case of coercion.

"Contacts of mothers with social network" (Factor 6) explains 6% of the variance (r: .19) in the single mother group only. This is in accordance with Weinraub & Wolfs(1983) observation of a negative correlation between maternal nurturance and total social contacts in their sample of single mothers. These authors speculate that the mothers experience a Catch 22 situation ; they either confine themselves with the child and become more irritable or choose to

spend more time out of home and get less attuned to their child's needs. The child would then become more difficult to handle and the mothers less effective in their interaction with the child. This is certainly a case where more social participation would accompany a negative state in the interaction between single mothers and their child. This does not appear as a problem with married mothers.

Budgeting time and allocation of ressources also seems to represent more problems with single mothers when the number of children increases. There is indeed a significant correlation between the number of children and the use of coercive strategies with single mothers only. Authoritarianism is said to be associated with the need of a higher degree of discipline necessary for the functioning of larger family units (Nye, Carlson & Garrett, 1970). This may be more apparent with single parent families due to the abscence of another adult to support mothers' attempts to control children behavior.

Conclusion

This research has permitted clarification of the relative importance of several of the ecological elements potentially related to the utilization of coercive strategies by mothers of 6 to 8 years old children. Strong ties between the number of children, the level of schooling and the the use of authoritarian maternal behaviors have been identified. However, personal/environmental variables such as educational values, occupational status, physical density of the mother's appartment and low ratio of her social network offering emotional support (Factor 3) explains more of the variance than the former variables. Level of schooling was found to be an important revealer in terms of this association between Factor 3 and coercive scores. Speculation have been offered as to how this interaction might work, but empirical evidence is yet to be produced with regard to that theme as well as with respect to the presence of a positive correlation between small and satisfying social network and coercion among mothers of intact families.

Single mothers and two parent family mothers report the same frequency in the utilization

of coercive disciplinary efforts with their children. This was found to be the case despite more dissatisfaction expressed by single mothers on a variety of aspects of their social and physical environment. It is henceforth necessary to document potentially protecting factors of an effective and harmonious mother-child relationship in single mother families. Social support, mainly in terms of its perceived availability and adequacy appears to be one of these at least in two parent families (Turner & Avison, 1985); some evidence exists that this could also be the case with single mothers (Weinraub & Wolf, 1983). However, there could exist some differences between single and two parent family mothers in terms of the structure and dynamics of their respective social network, of their specific use of enacted social support and of the timing and nature of this support worth documenting.

References

Baumrind, D. (1967). Chid care practices enteceding three patterns of preschool behavior. *Genetic Psychology Monographs*, **35**, 43-88.

Campbell, M.L. & Cochran, M. (1983) *Social ties and perceptions of the child: The personal networks of married and single mothers* Paper presented at the Society for Research in Child Development's Biennal Meeting, Detroit.

Dumas, J.E. (In press). Interactional correlates of treatment outcome in behavioral parent training. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology.*

Garbarino, J. & Crouter, A. (1978). Defining the community context for parent-child relations: The correlates of child maltreatment. *Child Development*, **49**, 604-616.

Garbarino. J. & Sherman, D. (1980). High-risk neighborhoods and high-risk families: The human ecology of child maltreatment. *Child Development*, **51**, 188-198.

Gecas, V. (1979). The influence of social class on socialization. In W.R. Burr, R. Hill, F.I. Nye, & I.L. Reiss (Eds.), *Contemporary theories about the families* Volume 1. New York, The Free Press.

Gelles, R.S. & Strauss, M.A. (1977). Determinants of violence in the family: toward a theoritical integration. In W.R. Burr, R. Hill, F.I. Nye, & I.L. Reiss (Eds.), *Contemporary theories about the families* Volume 1. New York, The Free Press.

Grusec, J.E. & Kuczynski, L. (1980). Direction of effect in socialization: A comparison of the parent's versus the child's behavior as determinants of disciplinary techniques. *Developmental Psychology*, **16**, 1-9.

Holmes, T.H. & Rahe, R.H. (1967) The social readjustment rating scale. *Journal of Psychosomatic Research*, **11**, 213-218.

Hoffman, M.L. (1970) Moral Development. In P.H. Mussen (Ed.), *Carmichael's manual of child psychology*, Vol.2. New York, Wiley.

Kohn, M.L. (1963). Social class and parent-child relationships: An interpretation. *American Journal of Sociology*, **68**, 471-480.

Kohn, M.L. (1977) *Class and conformity: A study in values* (2nd edition). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Korbin, J.E. (1980) The cultural context of child abuse and neglect. *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 4, 3-15.

Lambert, W.E., Hamers, J.F. & Frasure-Smith, N. (1979) *Child-rearing values: A cross-national study.* New York: Praeger.

Laosa, L.M. (1983) School, occupation, culture and family: The impact of parental schooling on the parent-child relationship. In I.E. Sigel & L.M. Laosa (Eds.), *Changing families.* New York Plenum Press.

Neault, G. (1984). *Conduites rapportées et conduites observées: une étude de validité de convergence.* Unpublished Master Degree Thesis, Université du Québec à Montréal: Montréal.

Rollins, B.C. & Thomas, D.L. (1979). Parental support, power, and control techniques in the socialization of children. In W.R. Burr, R. Hill, F.i. Nye, & I.L. Reiss (Eds.), *Contemporary theories about the families.* Volume 1. New York, The Free Press.

Steinberg, L., Catalano, R. & Dooley, D. (1981). Economic antecedents of child abuse and neglect. *Child Development*, **52**, 975-985.

Tessier, R., Pilon,N. & Fecteau, D. (1985). Etude méthodologique d'un instrument de mesure des conduites de contrôle parental: Fiabilité et validité de construit. *Revue Canadienne des Sciences du Comportement*, **17**, 62-73.

Wahler, R.G. (1980). The insular mother: her problems in parent-child treatment. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, **13**, 207-219.

Wahler, R.G., & Dumas, J.E. (1983). *Stimulus class determinants of mother-child multidistressed families: assessment and intervention.* Paper presented at teh Vermont Conference on the Primary Prevention of Psychopathology, Bolton Valley, VT.

Weinraub, M, & Wolf, B. (1983). Effects of stress and social supports on mother-child interactions in single and two-parent families. *Child Development*, **54**, 1297-1311.

Table 1

Characterictics of mothers in the total sample and in one parent and two parent families

	Age		Number of children		Schooling		Income ($1,000)		Sex of large child	
	X	SD	X	SD	X	SD	X	SD	G	B
Total sample	33.1	4.9	2.0	1.0	12.3	3.4	19.3	14.2	36	34
One parent families	31.2	4.6*	1.7	1.0**	12.0	3.3	9.7	6.0***	21	14
Two parent families	35.1	4.6*	2.4	1.0**	12.7	3.5	28.4	13.8***	15	20

* t= -3.49, df 68, p<.01 (two tailed)

** t= -2.84, df 68, p<.01 (two tailed)

***t=-7.55, df 46.19 p<.01 (one tailed)

Table 2

Saturation coefficients in each of the six clusters derived with the factorial analysis of the 33[1] personal and environmental scores

	Factors					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Satisfaction with the physical appearance of neighborhood	.79					
Neighborhood security	.78					
Neighborhood as a place to raise children	.77					
Satisfaction with children playgrounds and spaces	.70					
Importance attributed to appartment caring for children	.56					
Satisfaction with child's group of friends	.55					
Satisfaction with help received from the social network		.70				
Appreciation of scholl influence in the child		.61				
Satisfaction with help received from professionals		.58				
Appreciation of contacts with school personal		.58				
Satisfaction with neighboors		.56				
Values of obediance and conformity			.67			
Density in the appartment			.59			
Occupational status			-.54			
Ratio of network enacting emotional support			-.47			
Satisfaction with emotional/intimate support				.76		
Satisfaction with instrumental support				.71		
Ratio of network enacting instrumental support				.54		
Network size				-.47		
Number of attended community groups					.83	
Attendance frequency of community groups					.81	
Frequency of contacts with members of the social network						.66
Frequency of network members assuring child supervision after school						.46
Satisfaction with the quality of the relation child/adult network						.46

1. Items with saturation coefficients under .45 or -.45 were ignored.

Table 3

Differences between means for each of the 33 personal and environmental variables (one parent vs two parent families).

	One parent	Two parent	t values	df	p</>
Values of obediance and conformity	- .1	.1			
Prosocial and autonomy values	- .1	.1			
Parental competence self-rating	3.6	3.7			
Satisfaction with number of children	2.2	2.1			
Difficulty in raising the child	3.0	3.2			
Weighted scores (Homes & Rahe)	261.8	152.0	2.24*	68	.03
Occupational status	2.2	2.1			
Financial situation /impact on parental role	3.2	4.0	-3.18**	56.9	.002
Density of appartment	.6	.7			
Importance of appartment /raising the child	3.7	4.0			
Satisfaction with child's friends	3.3	3.8	-2.08*	68	.04
Satisfaction with children playgrounds	3.4	3.4			
Neighborhood security	2.9	3.11			
Satisfaction with neighboors	3.4	4.1	-2.81**	60.3	.007
Residential stability	53.4	113.8	-3.06**	56.7	.003
Satisfaction with physical neighborhood	3.3	3.3			
Neighborhood as a place to raise child	3.1	3.8	-2.51*	68	.014
Appreciation of school personal	3.7	4.0			
Appreciation of school influence on child	3.6	4.1	-2.32*	68	.023
Satisfaction with help from professionals	3.6	3.9			
Satisfaction with help from social network	3.2	3.6			
Satisfaction / child supervision by others	4.3	4.5			
Frequency of child care by siblings	3.8	3.9			
Frequency of child care by network	7.0	7.3			
Satisfactio/ quality of child-adult network relationship	4.2	4.0			
Network size	7.5	9.1			
Frequency of contacts with network	60.0	55.6			
Ratio of network / emotional support	.63	.52	2.40*	68	.019
Satisfaction with emotional support	4.0	3.7			
Ratio of network / instrumental support	.42	.26	3.76**	63	.000
Satifaction with instrumental support	4.1	4.0			
Number of community groups	.98	1.25			
Frequency of contacts community groups	3.4	5.1			

* One-tailed

** Two-tailed

Table 4

Multiple regression matrix. Portion of the variance in coercion score distribution explained by each of the six personal/environmental factors, and by income and education

Summary table

Variable entered	Multiple R	R^2	R^2 change	Simple R	F	Sig.
Fact 1	.12	.01	.02	-.12	5.5	.000
Fact 4	.17	.03	.02	.12		
Fact 6	.22	.04	.02	.14		
Fact 3	.59	.35	.29	.55		
Fact 2	.59	.35	.00	-.00		
Fact 5	.59	.35	.00	-.06		
Schooling	.66	.44	.09	-.55		

(Factor 1: Positive perception of the environment; Factor 2: Satisfaction with overall help received from professionals and non-professionals; Factor 3: Values of conformity and poor conditions of life; Factor 4: Small and satisfying social network; Factor 5: Attendance to community groups; Factor 6: Contacts with members of the social network)

Table 5

Pearson moment correlations between personal/environmental factors, education, number of children and coercive scores in one parent and two parent families.

Variables	One parent families	Two parent families
Factor 1	-.11	-.18
Factor 2	-.02	-.02
Factor 3	.55***	.51***
Factor 4	-.02	.42**
Factor 5	-.14	-.07
Factor 6	.19	.07
Schooling	-.57***	-.54***
Number of children	.42**	-.07

** p<.01
*** p<.001

Table 6

Correlations (Pearson r) between personal and environmental factorial scores and scores of reported frequency of coercive behaviors utilisation in three educational subgroups

	Coercive scores		
	>9 years (N=16)	**>9 and >14 years (N=32)**	**>14 years(N=13)**
Factor 1	.27	-.06	.27
Factor 2	.14	-.09	-.54
Factor 3	.76	.28.	.05
Factor 4	-.09	.09	.07
Factor 5	-.35	-.03	.42
Factor 6	-.20	.30	.18